

Fulbright Sets Hearings On 'Vietnam Morass'

Senate Foreign Relations

Committee Chairman J. William Fulbright will conduct a week of public hearings, probably televised, on the war in Vietnam.

In making the announcement yesterday, Fulbright said he wants to help President Nixon "out of the Vietnam morass."

He said the hearings will begin Oct. 27. Secretary of State William P. Rogers and Defense Secretary Melvin R. Laird are invited to testify Oct. 30 and 31.

Subject of the hearings is a resolution sponsored by Sen. Charles E. Goodell, R-N.Y., that would require withdrawal of all U.S. troops by Dec. 1, 1970.

"If the Senate is to be a full and active partner in the making of foreign policy," Fulbright said, "it has a duty to help the President in finding a way out of the Vietnam morass. That will be the purpose of the coming hearings."

Tonkin Gulf Resolution

It was Fulbright's committee and Fulbright himself who supported the 1964 Tonkin Gulf resolution that gave the president, then Lyndon B. Johnson, what he considered the authority to increase U.S. participation to war levels in Vietnam.

Since then, Fulbright has regretted that action and there has been some talk of trying to reverse the 1964 resolution. Few in the Senate expect Goodell's resolution to come up for a vote, however. It is seen principally as a vehicle for full debate on the war.

One by one, dovish Senators and House members — both Republicans and Democrats — are taking up the litany that the war must come to a quick conclusion.

Friday it was Sen. Charles H. Percy, R-Ill. He called for a suspension of U.S. offensive ground operations for as long as Hanoi takes no advantage of it.

Percy said now is a good time for the U.S. to take another peace initiative for ending the bombing and shelling of enemy targets in South Vietnam.

Two press conferences are scheduled tomorrow by congressmen concerned over the war.

At one, a bipartisan group headed by Reps. Paul Findley, R-Ill., Vernon W. Thomas, R-Wis., William L. Hungate, D-Mo., and Thomas P. O'Neill Jr., D-Mass., will tell of a resolution to be introduced tomorrow afternoon.

A Findley aide said yesterday there now are more than 20 co-sponsors for the resolution.

Troop Cuts Applauded

It applauds the previously announced troop reductions in Vietnam and prods Nixon with a further plea that the President be supported in his "expressed determination to withdraw our remaining forces."

The four say they feel the troop cuts are a constructive step but that it is "vitally important" for Congress to make its concern for peace clear.

Also tomorrow, a Senate group will discuss administration Vietnam policies along with plans for participation in the Oct. 15 Vietnam moratorium demonstrations.

Among those expected at the meeting are Sens. Alan Cranston, D-Calif., Frank Church, D-Idaho, and Mark Hatfield, R-Ore., and Reps. Ogden Rostenburg, R-N.Y., Shirley Chisholm, D-N.Y., Paul N. McCloskey, R-Calif., and Allard K. Lowenstein, D-N.Y.

On the other side of the debate, Sen. Barry M. Goldwater, R-Ariz., yesterday urged the Senate to consider saturation bombing of Haiphong and destruction of dikes used for irrigation in North Vietnamese rice fields if the Paris peace talks remain deadlocked.

Goldwater, in a speech at the annual convention of the Alabama Air Force association in Huntsville, said "the decision made back in the 1960s to fight a limited war" has been misread by the Communists as a sign of weakness, leading to prolonged bombing and shelling of enemy targets in South Vietnam.